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By The Numbers**April, 2008**

New Subdivisions Reviewed '07	82
Zoning Cases Reviewed:2007	164
Zoning Cases Reviewed:2008 to date.	49
Acres in Final Plans Reviewed	357
Tract Surveys: 2007	174
Tract Surveys: 2008 to date.	41
Floodplain Development Permits issued; 2008 to date.	3

TrendLines

Planning today for tomorrow's vital and livable communities.

THE LEAD: Planning Commission Begins Parking Survey

As part of the ongoing transportation planning process, the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission (SSCRPC) conducts a yearly survey of parking in Springfield's central area. The goals of this study are to maintain an up-to-date inventory of parking facilities in the Springfield central area and to maintain adequate and current information on parking spaces for the transportation database.

This information is used by the SSCRPC as an indicator of parking trends and needs in the central area, to increase citizen awareness of available parking spaces, and to help estimate the number of people traveling to the downtown area.

In addition to the core annual

survey, the report also includes information on the availability of bicycle racks in the central area, the effect of the City's landscaping ordinance on parking lots, and a closer look at public parking in the downtown shopping core.

The survey area is the same as that covered when the survey started in 1981, and will be bounded on the north by Carpenter Street, on the east by 11th Street, on the south by Lawrence Avenue, and on the west by Pasfield Street, jogging one block west along Capitol Avenue and continuing north along Lewis Street.

Field surveys are conducted by SSCRPC staff in the spring, when an inventory is created by walking each block of the survey



area and counting both on and off-street parking spaces. Time limits on parking meters and any parking restrictions in place are also noted. In addition, information is obtained from property management firms and property owners as to classification and number of spaces in some lots, particularly in underground parking areas and ramps.

So if you notice Planning Commission staff on the streets this spring with clip-boards in hand, they aren't checking out the newest cars, just where they are parking!

THE SECOND STORY: Curb Your Car and Bike to Work!

With gasoline prices above the \$3.50 barrier, there may be no better time to consider traveling to work using other means than the automobile. You are encouraged to do just that on Friday, May 16, which is National Bike to Work Day.

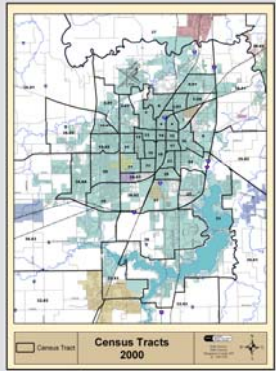
No, a bike isn't the only way to "curb your car", and walking to work, riding the bus and carpooling are also encouraged.

Research indicates that if only 5% of Springfield workers curbed their cars for just one day, over 1,000 gallons of gasoline would be saved, 9.9 tons of carbon dioxide would not be released into the atmosphere, and each person would burn 50 calories per mile by walking or biking!

This year the SSCRPC is joining with a number of local busi-

nesses and organizations (see Page 2) to promote alternatives to traveling by car. For more information on how you can "curb your car" and take part in Bike to Work events on May 16, call 535-3110.





AARP study indicates that community leaders believe that seniors benefit their communities through volunteering, sharing experiences, providing economic benefits, and being good solid citizens.

HAZARD MITIGATION TASKFORCE WRAPPING UP WORK

The Hazard Mitigation Task Force is wrapping up its work to create a plan that will lessen the impact of natural hazard events on the citizens of Sangamon County.

After generating nine pages of suggested ideas at its February meeting, the 20 participating communities spent the past two months putting together project lists to include in the plan. The number of projects submitted per community ranged from one to 22. Project lists were also submitted by the American Red Cross, the Springfield Park District, the Springfield Mass Transit District, and the Springfield Metro Sanitary District, who were repre-

sented on the task force along with 23 other technical partners and members of the general public. A subcommittee developed a project prioritization method that will be used to prioritize each project.

A draft plan is being prepared by the SSCRPC staff and should be ready by mid-May.

The last task force meeting will be held on June 11 and will include a public hearing on the draft plan. Once the final document is ready, it will be submitted to FEMA for approval, and then each community will be required to adopt the plan. At that point they will become eligible to apply

for Hazard Mitigation Grant funding from FEMA for eligible projects included in the plan.

A workgroup has been established to perform annual reviews of the plan and a five-year update as required by FEMA. The Village of Rochester will facilitate the workgroup with assistance from the Village of Thayer.

All community representatives on the Hazard Mitigation Task Force will be members of the workgroup along with the three technical partner representatives who also volunteered. The SSCRPC will assist by providing such support as maintenance of the Hazard Mitigation Plan website.

RESEARCH REPORT: Older Adults Are Not “Snowbirds”

A recent study by AARP dispels the common assumption that the majority of older Americans want to pack up their belongings and move to warmer climes. The report, *Aging, Migration, and Local Communities: The Views of 60+ Residents and Community Leaders*, says that only 9%, or 4.4 million people age 60+, were “residentially

mobile”, moving beyond their county in the five years prior to the 2000 Census. In fact, 9 of 10, or 41.5 million Americans age 60+, prefer to stay in the same home and county.

The study reports that elders are motivated to stay because they want to live near family and

friends, are satisfied with their current home, or satisfied with current job or job opportunities. Greatest motivation for moving is to be closer to family and friends.

Key areas of the seniors’ concern included transportation and affordable housing.

Sponsoring Partners for “Curb Your Car & Bike to Work”.

The SSCRPC is pleased to announce that the following businesses and organizations are helping to sponsor local events for National Bike to Work Day:

- St. John’s Hospital through Prairie Heart Institute and Athletic Care, which designed and printed the posters.
- The Springfield Mass Transit District (SMTD).
- The Springfield Park District.
- Downtown Springfield, Inc.
- Springfield Roadrunners Club.
- Springfield Bicycle Club.

- WeGoGreen.org.

If you would like to take part in this year’s events, or sign-up to be a sponsor for next year, contact the Planning Commission at 535-3110.



FUTURE WATCH: Drivers on Cell Phones Clog Traffic

From Illinois Association of Regional Councils' *Regional News* (Winter 2008)

Motorists who talk on cell phones drive slower on the freeway, pass sluggish vehicles less often, and take longer to complete their trips, according to a University of Utah study that suggests drivers on cell phones congest traffic.

"At the end of the day, the average person's commute is longer because of that person who is on the cell phone right in front of them," says University of Utah psychology professor Dave Strayer, leader of the research team.

Strayer's research group has published studies showing that:

- Hands-free cell phones are no less dangerous while driving than hand-held cell phones because the conversation is the major distraction.
- When adults talk on cell phones while driving, their reaction times become as slow as reaction times for senior citizens.
- Drivers talking on cell phones are as impaired as

drivers with the 0.08 blood alcohol level that defines drunken driving in most states.

- Highway statistics suggest drivers on cell phones are four times more likely to be in an accident.

An insurance company survey estimated that 73% of wireless users talk while driving. Another survey found that during any given daytime moment, 10% of US drivers are on their cell phones.



"73% of wireless users talk while driving...during any given daytime moment, 10% of US drivers are on their cell phone."

LEGAL WATCH: Numerical Limits on Specific Uses

Zoning Practice (Oct. 2007, p. 4-6) reports that some communities have adopted numerical limits on certain uses (like restaurants) that "they feel are overabundant and may drive out more desirable uses." One example is Carmel, CA, that adopted city-wide caps on hotel and motel units, and Laguna Beach, CA, that adopted a cap on specific uses in particular zoning districts. *Zoning Practice* reports that San Francisco and Portland, ME, have adopted this tool as well.

In Portland's case, a local organi-

zation successfully lobbied that city to adopt a regulation that puts a cap on "formula businesses" — such as large chain restaurant and retail establishments — in the downtown area, arguing that the proliferation of such uses in the downtown and in the harbor area were eroding the uniqueness of these areas and damaging the local economy.

Portland's code allows 23 formula businesses, but these businesses cannot be larger than 2,000 square feet in size, with some exceptions for such businesses as gas stations and pharmacies.

Zoning Practice notes that some legal issues have been raised, such as questions of equal protection (as land-use regulations must be rationally related to legitimate objectives and not discriminatory), not constitute a "taking" (whereby the regulation would threaten the economic viability of the property), and must be applied in an even-handed way. The report notes, addressing takings, that "these regulations are on safer legal ground if they are legislatively adopted and uniformly applied, as opposed to being applied on an ad hoc, discretionary basis."

NEIGHBORHOODS: Get Registered!

One of the tasks of the Planning Commission is to maintain a list of active neighborhood associations in Springfield and Sangamon County. This listing is used for a number of purposes, primarily as a way to notify neighborhoods of changes and seek input

on regional plans of various kinds.

If your neighborhood has an association and you want to know if it is currently registered with the Commission, just call 535-3110 and Commission staff can assist you.

If your association is active and not listed, you may want to have it listed and recognized. Again, just contact the Commission at the above number and staff will be able to help you identify what your association will need to submit.



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Upcoming Events:

- **The Springfield Historic Sites Commission's 16th Annual Mayor's Awards for Historic Preservation. Wednesday, April 30, 2008. For more information call 525-6690.**
- **Curb Your Car on Bike to Work Day. Friday, May 16.**
- **Memorial Day. Monday, May 26. Commission offices will be closed.**
- **Sangamon County Historic Preservation Commission will meet in Room 212 of the County Building at 4:00PM on May 7, June 4 and July 2.**
- **Regional Planning Commission meets in the County Board Chamber at 9:30 AM on the third Wednesday of each month unless otherwise posted.**

About the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission



The Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission (SSCRPC) serves as the joint planning body for the City of Springfield and Sangamon County. The Planning Commission also works with other public and semi-public agencies throughout the area to promote orderly growth and redevelopment.

The Commission has 17 members including representatives from the Sangamon County Board, Springfield City Council, special units of government, and 6 appointed citizens from the city and county. The Executive Direc-

tor is appointed by the Executive Board of the Commission.

The Planning Commission, through its professional staff, provides overall planning services related to land use, housing, recreation, transportation, economics, environment, and special projects.

The agency prepares area-wide planning documents and assists the county, cities, and villages, as well as special districts, with planning activities. The staff reviews all proposed subdivisions and makes recommendations on all county zoning and variance requests. The agency serves

as the Floodplain Administrator, Census coordinator, and local A-95 review clearinghouse to process and review all federally funded applications for the county. The agency also maintains existing base maps, census tract maps, township and zoning maps and the road name map for the county.

The Planning Commission's Executive Director is also the Plats Officer for Sangamon County. Divisions of land must be reviewed by the Plats Officer to insure compliance with the State Plat Act and local zoning and subdivision regulations.